

Draft of editorial for True Detective Mysteries

No LCS

IT CAN BE DONE

" _____ and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

It is inconceivable that the United States ever again will face the crisis which stirred Abraham Lincoln to oratorical heights at Gettysburg, and equally inconceivable that the theory of democratic government he thus defined there shall ever again perish from the earth.

It is a regrettable fact, however, that government by the people and for the people has been, for temporary periods, only a hollow mockery in certain sections of the country. Political charlatans have seized control of the ballot boxes, and manipulated local governments for the benefit of themselves and their henchmen. Until recently our great Missouri metropolis of Kansas City was a obvious example of this, but Kansas City is coming back to the people __ and every politically dominated stronghold of corruption eventually will be won back by the decent, and respectable, law abiding majority. It can be done --- it is being done in Kansas City,

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Details of the disgraceful machine rule graft and corruption in the Missouri metropolis have been widely publicized, and I do not need to repeat them for the readers of True Detective Mysteries. Suffice to say that the political bosses were brazenly stealing city funds, violating state statutes as they pleased, and gleefully dividing the enormous profits from vice. The bosses ruled the police department and law enforcement was at a low ebb. Most distressing of all— there apparently was no power strong enough to give the government back to the people.

I was not unaware of this condition when I was honored by the voters of Missouri by

being elected to the office of Governor. In my campaign, I had made it clear that, if elected, I would use the full power of my office in an effort to reestablish law enforcement, and to attack, and break if possible, the evils of machine rule in Missouri.

After a thorough study of the whole situation, one fact stood out. An honest election in Kansas City was out of the question under certain existing conditions. Permanent registration of voters was put into effect, and since the members of the election board were appointed by the Governor, I promptly appointed new members to this important post, these actions resulting in a complete cooperation between those in control of the ballot boxes and a Federal Grand Jury, hot on the trail of vote frauds. Within a few months hundreds of precinct workers had been indicted by this courageous grand jury for election irregularities. The cases against them were disposed of without a single acquittal. Then, with the machine on the defensive for the first time in years, I assigned investigators to dig into the affairs of the underworld to prepare evidence of collaboration between law violators and the so-called political powers, for presentation to a Jackson

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County Grand Jury. This investigation began several months before the jury was called by one of Kansas City's courageous judges.

The investigators from my office obtained voluminous evidence of crime and corruption. Innumerable raids then took place upon gambling houses, on warrants issued by this courageous Judge, Southern. Scores of gamblers and frequenters were arrested and gambling equipment brought in by the truck load to be used as evidence# Records were seized indicating the vast income of these politically connected gamblers which lead to their indictments by both the Federal and Jackson County Grand Juries—the untouchables were at last ensnared; the owners of these gambling palaces being powerful members of the machine.

In the meantime, the federal government had been following up its smashing victories in the vote fraud cases, and the grand jury had returned a number of indictments naming political leaders on charges of income tax evasion. These indictments were not confined

to the small fry, but struck the very pillars of the machine. Then the county grand jury again struck at machine rule by indicting Henry F. McElroy, the city manager of Kansas City on charges of mishandling city funds than ran into the thousands of dollars.

The scope of the joint federal and county investigations was so far-reaching that within the space of a few days, Kansas City was cleared of vice and gambling# Narcotic rings were broken and political lugs and pay-offs had vanished# Then, to make certain that the honest and efficient members of the city police department could reestablish law enforcement without fear of reprisals from the bosses, the police department was taken over by the state law makers, and its control placed in the hands of state officials# This was possible under Missouri statutes which provide that the departments of the state's large cities shall be controlled by boards appointed by the

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Governor.

I do not, by any means, intend the foregoing as a full account of how the government of Kansas City was returned to the people. On the contrary, I have merely sketched the situation, and what was done about it todate, to prove that the political-vice gangs, wherever they exist, can be broken. It can be done---but only through the cooperation of the citizenry and public officials who are not afraid to act.

Obviously, when political bosses control the polls and are able to stuff the ballot boxes to elect the men of their choice, the voters themselves are powerless. Likewise, no public official can move against such a political machine unless citizens are willing to come forward to testify before a grand jury. In the final analysis, no corrupt political machine can ever exist against an aroused citizenry. Government of the people, by the people, for the people, is a principle dear to the heart of every American, and when there is a will to keep government decent, there is a way--It can be done.

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